



# Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

## *Taunton, MA*

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

### BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the City of Taunton for a Brownfields Pilot. Taunton is an old seaport and industrial community located between Boston, Fall River, and New Bedford. Use of the seaport declined due to the development of new transportation modes and the difficulty large ships had with navigating the shallow waters. As a result, the city's economy also declined. Most development is occurring away from the downtown area, which has left the city's core with abandoned or underused and potentially contaminated business and industrial sites and residential units. The city (population 51,500) has identified the Weir Village section of Taunton, which has approximately 9,700 residents, as an area in need of revitalization. This target area lies along the Taunton River and is subject to flooding. In addition, the area has many brownfields sites. This combination of flooding and brownfields pose many concerns for the health and welfare of the mostly low-income, minority residents in Weir Village.

A stream flows through the 15-acre former foundry and tannery that is the Pilot-targeted site. A number of industries, including the tannery, which closed in the mid 1980s, disposed of waste products in the stream and surrounding area. As a result, the contaminants are discharged into the tidal river and

### PILOT SNAPSHOT



Taunton, Massachusetts

Date of Announcement:  
June 1999

Amount: \$200,000

Profile: The Pilot targets a 15-acre former tannery and foundry located in the city's Weir Village neighborhood, a blighted and distressed area along the Taunton River.

#### Contacts:

City of Taunton  
Mayor's Office of  
Community Development  
(508) 821-1030

Regional Brownfields Team  
U.S. EPA - Region 1  
(617) 573-9681

Visit the EPA Region 1 Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/region01/remed/brnflld/>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

open waters. Because the area is also a flood plain, heavy rains further spread contaminants to adjacent properties and the Taunton River.

## OBJECTIVES

The Pilot's objective is to spur the economic revitalization of the city including expanding the tax base and creating jobs for local residents through assessment of the 15-acre former tannery site. The city anticipates that site assessment will encourage cleanup and redevelopment of the property. The Pilot's assessment efforts will coincide with other city efforts to alleviate the recurring flooding problem on the target site by diverting the stream. Additionally, it is hoped that cleanup and redevelopment of the tannery will be a catalyst for the cleanup and redevelopment of surrounding brownfields.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Conducting Phase I and Phase II environmental assessments within the 15-acre target site;
- Designing a cleanup plan for the site; and
- Using quarterly forums to involve the community in the assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment activities of the site.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.